## ABSTRACT

The present invention manages a messaging network having messaging platforms interconnecting through a switched backbone such as the Internet. The master platform monitors each messaging platform on the messaging network and administers the addition, deletion, and updating of messaging platforms by modifying a master global routing table in the event the master platform encounters changes to the status of the messaging platforms. In the event that the master global routing table is updated, the global routing table held at each messaging platform is also updated, ensuring version consistency between said master global routing table and each of the global routing tables. This enables the master platform and each messaging platform to determine the operational status of another messaging platform. The present invention may also provide a cost tracking scheme when delivering messages between messaging platforms that are owned by different entities. This avoids use agreements between messaging platform owners and owners of networks which are connected to the messaging platforms. The cost for each network message delivery is measured in tokens. The present invention may also include a post office function that enables a master platform to receive and store a status message destined for a messaging platform which does not have an active connection to the messaging network or is in a non-operational state. The present invention may also include an information delivery service that delivers a message from at least one source outside of the messaging network to a subscriber via the subscriber's messaging platform regardless of whether the messaging platform has a dedicated or dial-up connection.